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PRESIDENTS OF BALTIC STATES MEET. Baltic Presidents Lennart Meri (Estonia), Guntis Ulmanis (Latvia), and Algirdas Brazauskas (Lithuania) officially inaugurated the activities of the Baltic Peacekeeping Battalion (Baltbat) at the former Soviet army base at Adazi, Latvia, Western agencies report. Ulmanis told a press conference that Baltbat was important for Baltic security and a clear example of Baltic cooperation. The presidents, after a meeting in Jurmala, issued a statement urging Western nations not to put the Baltic States on the slow track to NATO membership. "The criteria for admission to the North Atlantic Alliance need to be equal for all prospective members," the statement said. -- Saulius Girnius, OMRI, Inc.

LATVIA SIGNS INDIVIDUAL PFP PROGRAM. Latvian Defense Minister Janis Trapans, at a meeting with the NATO Council in Brussels on 8 February, concluded an agreement making Latvia the 11th country to sign an individual Partnership for Peace cooperation program, AFP reports. Trapans told a press conference that the agreement has symbolic and practical value, since it marked Latvia's return to the family of European nations and would help develop the country's military structures. -- Saulius Girnius, OMRI, Inc.

MAJOR PRIVATE LITHUANIAN TV STATION CLOSES. The Lithuanian Radio and TV Committee on 8 February discussed use of the TV channel on which the bankrupt private company LitPoliinter TV had broadcast until the previous day, RFE/RL's Lithuanian Service reports. LitPoliinter TV owes 800,000 litai ($200,000) to the state and would need another 1 million litai as security to regain the right to broadcast. The committee decided to accept until 8 March offers from companies to use the channel. The applicants have to present programming schedules and a statement from a commercial bank guaranteeing their ability to pay necessary expenses. The committee also decided that the successful applicant will have to reach an agreement to continue rebroadcasting programs from Russia's Ostankino Television. -- Saulius Girnius, MRI, Inc.